



The Freewinds promotes artists of the ABC islands

Port Captain Ludwig Alpers in conjunction with the Oranjestand Kunsthuis (Arts Center) hosted an evening of art and music aboard the cruise ship Freewinds on Saturday December 2, in an artful end to the year 2006. The exposition included the works of five artists each from the islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao, which displayed a variety of influences, but many were done in the brilliant colors of the tropics, with the regional flora and fauna the subject.

Jani Croes and Gerda van Leeuwen were two of the Aruban artists present as was Adi Figueroa of Bonaire to discourse on their work. Jani is well known for his "Just Jazzy" radio program, and was quite enthusiastic about the jazz performance of accomplished singer Debby Beaujon of Curacao, who headlined the show for the evening with the Freewind's band. Jani also presented a sculpture that he considered a departure from his usual work, but he also felt represented the artistic union of the three islands.

Gerda van Leeuwen again was represented by one of her vibrant watercolors, this time of tropical marine life, a subject that she does beyond compare. The other Aruban artists represented in this collection were Walter Kock, Belinda de Veere and René Nieuwmeyer.

Adi truly "gets back to the soil" of his homeland by incorporating the sand from the beaches of Bonaire into the materials to create a very tactile piece. His painting achieves a three dimensional effect through the use of foam, and the texture creates in the observer to an irresistible urge to touch it.

A great diversity of work from the artists were on display, and included two practical pieces from Bonaire; painted chairs that would be an interesting addition to the décor of any home, but are too beautiful to sit upon!

The evening of art appreciation ended with an delightful performance by the talented Debby Beaujon, performing a lively program of classic contemporary music that had everyone "Feeling Good" just like the James Brown song to which she did justice.

"For eighteen years The Freewinds has been plying the waters of the ABC islands," expressed Ludwig Alpers, " and we feel very much a part of the community and culture of them, so it is truly a pleasure for us to host these evening on board the ship."